

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 164.

The Principles of Nature.

NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM.

Extract from Carlyle's "SARTOR RESARTUS."

It is in his stupendous section, headed *Natural Supernaturalism*, that the professor first becomes a sooth; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory clothes-philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "clothes and cobwebs" of imperial mandarins, superannuated symbols, and what not; yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worse of all, two quite mysterious, world-embracing phantasms, TIME and SPACE, have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering; but with these also he now resolutely grapples; these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Here, therefore, properly it is that the philosophy of clothes attains to transcendentalism; this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where *Palinogenesis* (New Birth), in all sense, may be considered as beginning. "Courage, then!" may our Diogenes exclaim, with better right than Diogenes the First ones did. This stupendous section we after long, painful meditation, have found not to be unintelligible; but on the contrary to grow clear, nay radiant, and all-illuminating. Let the reader, turning on it what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him, do his part as we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours.

"Deep has been, and is, the significance of miracles," thus quietly begins the professor; "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a miracle? To that Dutch king of Siam, an icle had been a miracle; who had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my horse again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical "Open Sesame!" every time I please to pay two-pence, and open for him an impassable schelling, or shut turmpike?

But is not a real miracle simply a violation of the laws of nature? ask several; whom I answer by this new question: What are the laws of nature? To me, perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper law, now first penetrated into, and by spiritual force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its material force.

Here too may some inquire, not without astonishment: On what ground shall one, that can make iron swim, come and declare that therefore he can teach religion? To us truly of the nineteenth century, such declaration were inept enough; which nevertheless to our fathers, of the first century, was full of meaning.

"But is it not the deepest law of nature that she be constant," cries an illuminated class. "Is not the machine of the universe fixed to move by unalterable rules?" Probable enough, good friends. Nay, I too must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be "without variableness or shadow of turning," does indeed never change; that nature, that the universe, which no one who it so pleases can be prevented from calling a machine, does move by the most unalterable rules. And now of you too I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete statute-book of nature, may possibly be?

"They stand written in our works of science," say you; "in the accumulated records of man's experience?" Was man with his experience present at the creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel, that they might his ground-plan of the incomprehensible All, and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this! Alas! not in anywise! These scientific individuals have been nowhere, elsewhere we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore.

Laplace's book on the stars, wherein he exhibits that certain planets, with their satellites, gyrate round our worthy sun, at a rate and in a course which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting, is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest "mechanism of the heavens," and "system of the world," this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschell's fifteen thousand suns per minute being left out, some paltry handful of moons and inner balls, had been looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the zodiacal way; so that we can now prate of their whereabouts; their how, their why, and their what, being hid from us as in the signless

System of nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, nature seems of quite infinite depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries, and measured square miles. The course of nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a planet, is partially known to us; but who knows what deeper courses these depend on, what infinitely longer cycle (of causes) our little epicycle

revolves on! To the minnow, every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident of its little native creek may have become familiar; but does the minnow understand the ocean tides and periodic currents, the trade-winds and monsoons, and moon's eclipses; by all which the condition of its little creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (miraculously enough), be quite overthrown and reversed? Such a minnow is man; his creek this planet earth, his ocean the immeasurable all, his monsoons and periodic currents the mysterious course of Providence through ages of aeons.

We speak of the volume of nature, and truly a volume it is, whose author and writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man so much as know the alphabet thereof? With its words, sentences, and grand descriptive pages, practical and philosophical, spread out through solar systems and thousands of years, we shall not try them. It is a volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true sacred writing, of which even prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your institutes and academies of science, they strive bravely; and, from the thick-crowded, inextricably-intertwisted hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dexterous combination, some letters in the vulgar character, and therewith put together this and the other economic recipe, of high avail in practice. That nature is more than some boundless volume of such recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible domestic cookery book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve itself, the fewest dreams

Custom, continues the professor, doth make dotards of us all. Consider well, thou wilt find that custom is the greatest of weavers, and weaves airy raiment for all the Spirits of the Universe, whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops; but their spiritual nature becomes to the most, forever hidden. Philosophy complains that custom has hoodwinked us from the beginning; that we do everything by custom, even believe by it; that our very axioms, let us boast of free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is philosophy throughout, but a continual battle against custom, and an ever-renewed effort to transmute the sphere of blind custom, and so become transcendental?

Innumerable are the illusions and legerdemain tricks of custom; but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder; and herein is custom a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond, foolish nurse, or rather we are, foolish nurslings, when in our resting and reflective hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two hundred, or two million times? There is no reason in nature or in art why I should; unless, indeed, I am a mere work-machine, for whom the divine gift of thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of steam is to the steam-engine; a power whereby cotton might be spun, and money and money's worth realized.

Still worse is it with regard to time. Your grand anti-magician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the time-annihilating hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a world of miracles, wherein all failed or authentically thaumaturgy and feats of magic were outdone. But unhappy we have not such a hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion, built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his lyre? Yet tell me, who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summing out all the sandstone rocks to dance along from the Steinbruch (now a huge troglodyte chasm, with frightful green mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses, and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine music of wisdom, succeeded in civilizing man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen hundred years ago; his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus, but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built—no work that man glories in ever done.

Sweep away the illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near-moving cause to its far-distant mover. The stroke that came transmuted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck and sent flying? Ah, could I (with the time-annihilating hat) transport thee direct from the beginnings to the endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the light seen of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed city of God; that through every star, through every glass-blade, and most through every living soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But nature, wretched is the TIME-VESTURE OF GOD, and reveals him to the wise, hides him from the foolish.

Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost! The English Johnson longed all his life to see one, but could not, though he went to Cock Lane, and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins. Foolish Doctor! Did he never with the mind's eye as well as the body's, look round him into that full tide of human life he so loved; did he never so much as look into himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well nigh a million of Ghosts were traveling the streets by his side. Once more, I say, sweep away the illusion of time; compress the three

Seneca, who as yet stand hidden in the depths of that late time!

Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the past annihilated, then, or only past; is the future non-existent or future? Those mystic faculties of thine, memory and hope, already answer; already through these mystic avenues, thou, the earth-blinded, summonest both past and future, and continuest with them, though as yet darkly! and with mute beckonings. The curtains of yesterday roll down, the curtains of tomorrow roll up; but yesterday and tomorrow both are. Pierce through the time-element, glance into the eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of man's soul, that time and space are not God, but creations of God; that with God, as it is a universal Illo, so is it an everlasting Now.

And sees thou therein any glimpse of immortality? O heaven! Is the white tomb of our loved one who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in our heart, as a pale, mournfully receding mile-stone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone—but a pale, spectral illusion? Is the lost friend still mysteriously here, even as we are here mysteriously with God? Know of a truth that only the time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure, for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries; believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

That the thought-forms, space and time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this earth to live, should condition and determine our whole practical reasonings, conceptions, and imaginings—seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit space and time to their due rank as forms of thought; may, even if thou wilt, to their quite undeviant rank of reality; and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-fulfillments! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand, and clutch the sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand, and therewith clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which space practices on us.

Still worse is it with regard to time. Your grand anti-magician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the time-annihilating hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a world of miracles, wherein all failed or authentically thaumaturgy and feats of magic were outdone. But unhappy we have not such a hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

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So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the form of a body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian night, on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What force and fire is in each he expends; one grinding in the mill of industry; one, hunter-like, climbing the giddy Alpine heights of science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife with his fellow; and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly venture fails away, and soon even to sense becomes a vanished shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering Dragoon of Heaven's artillery, doth this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; earth's mountains are leveled, and her seas filled up, in our passage. Can the earth, which is but dead, and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some foot-print of us is stamped in; the last rest of the host will read traces of the earliest van. But whence!—O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; faith knows not; only that it is through mystery to mystery, from God and to God.

"We are such stuff,
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep!"

MOVEMENT OF MATERIAL OBJECTS BY SPIRIT-FORCE.

Almost every number of the TELEGRAPH contains accounts of heavy substances having been moved by Spirits without the intervention of human agency; and those who are opposed to Spiritualism charge Spiritualists with believing this to arise from influences in direct contradiction to natural law. Now, I believe that, so far as these accounts are true, they arise from the exercise of natural law, to an extent not before understood; and that the time will arrive when these phenomena will be perceived to bear the same relation to natural law as do the phenomena of combustion, gravitation etc. For each of these we have a representative word which merely represents a process we observe, but the cause of which is not understood. We all know that bodies attract each other, and this we call "gravity." We understand it as a truth established, but who knows the cause? We also know that in the process of combustion, carbon dissolves in oxygen; that the thing burned is not put out of existence, but merely changes its figure to a new form known as carbonic acid, which we can readily trace through all its after-combinations and re-appropriations; but all this does not explain the cause of combustion, nor the cause of the consequent heat, but merely the medium. Still, it is no less a truth, and we clearly comprehend it as such.

No one can tell the cause why the wind blows the tide of the atmospheric ocean, the source of electricity, the brightness of flame, or the source of the sun's light; still, all these are admitted truths, and for each of them we find current analogies throughout nature, and any of them that seems to produce an inkling of the cause, but carries us farther back for a source, and eventually we attribute all to the Great First Cause, the divine will.

It is not difficult to suppose that other forces equal to that of gravitation do exist, and still are not observable except in their effects. The movement of material objects in spiritual circles may be of this character.

We know electricity exercises repulsive force, and that, too, when not confused, in all other directions except the one toward which it repels; but we do not know the cause of this repulsion. We continually hear of crackling sounds, minute lights, and other phenomena occurring where circles are held, which would indicate the presence of rarer media analogous to electricity, and perhaps differing very widely in their properties.

Our present object is to show, that with the known exceptions claimed for Spirit-action, the smallest possible amount of force may be rendered available for the production of the most material effects, by simply admitting certain natural laws affecting this force in particular directions.

A force is the measure of the weight of any material multiplied by its velocity. Thus if the fibre of a feather could be moved with sufficient velocity it would easily cut the surface of steel. It is on this principle that a wheel of paper rapidly revolved, will cut in two a bar of steel held against it. It is for this reason that a tallow candle fired from a gun will, assisted by its velocity, pass through a pine board.

Now we have only to admit that any substance having the millionth of one grain weight shall travel with the velocity of light, and it will exercise a force on any body in a state of rest sufficiently great to enter or sever it; or we have only to suppose that it shall travel around the surface of a cylinder in a screw or helix-like direction with this immense velocity, and that cylinder, whatever might be its weight, would be raised. Thus, instead of an iron bar turning in a lathe against a chisel at rest, if the chisel itself could travel around the iron bar with the velocity that electricity with light travels, the bar would be projected from the chisel with a force equal to the weight of the chisel, multiplied by this immense velocity. Hence, when the velocity can be carried to an extent, the amount of force on the surface impinged upon, is sufficient to sustain a world, or revolve a planet in its orbit.

As an example of this being applied by a material which we only know as a force, and of the entity of which we have a very slight idea, let us observe the action of a single current of electricity, which our minds do not admit as material, through a wire wound around a cylinder or rod of iron, as in Delarue's ring, the termini of this coil being attached to the two opposite poles of a galvanic battery. Let this rod, then, be decreased in size so that it will fitly pass through this opening or helix of insulated wire, and the current will sustain the rod pendent in the atmosphere.

The time required for the electricity to pass through this helix, even if composed of ten miles of wire, is immeasurably small; but at every half-inch of its travel it is exercising a repulsive force on this rod, suspended in the center of the helix, and thus its line of repulsive travel is in the form of a screw relatively to the surface of that rod; and thus Doctor Page, with such a helix, sustains pendent in the atmosphere a rod of iron weighing a thousand pounds, and sustaining on its upper end a stage or platform loaded with a weight of two thousand pounds. If on the top of this helix, and surrounding the rod in the same manner, he places another helix of similar construction, and passes the connection from the termini of the lower to the termini of the upper helix, this immense weight immediately rises. Thus he may change the termini from the upper to the lower, causing the rod to perform the office of a trip-hammer, and all this by the repulsive force of so much electricity as can play through a single wire.

Now, if we admit that time and space are not elements in the movement of Spirit-force, and we admit the existence of such force, then we also admit its power to move with a velocity many times greater than that with which electricity travels; and if so, it requires but to admit that the line of direction of this travel of rarer media, is under the control of Spirit-intelligence, and we can readily understand that such a helix-like movement around the legs of a table, with an upward tendency, must hit it, whatever amount of weight be placed upon it.

Spiritualists have only to establish that the rarer media do exist (and all observable truth seems to claim the necessity of such existence), and then to show that time is not an element in the action of such rarer media, and they at once prove by the exercise of natural law as understood in the everyday occurrences of life, that material objects may be moved by Spirit-influence, without any offense to the known laws of God and Nature.

PHOENIX.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.—This is not the offspring of a diseased mind and moral action. It is not the strange fire that is kindled from the bottomless pit, and kept alive by excited passions. It is not the feverish excitement or the fitful wanderings of the distracted brain. Neither the fear of punishment or the desire for denominational supremacy, can be among the elements of true devotion. The true worshiper is moved by an inward impulse. He is drawn upward by the attractive power of the Positive Mind. By a divine yet natural impulse, the spirit is quickened into newness of life and is made to manifest its power in beautiful and harmonious action. Thus the poor and lowly may render appropriate homage. It requires no costly sacrifices—no difficult and painful service. It is the offering of the heart—the incense of pure thoughts and devout emotions, and its highest manifestation is the obedience of the worshiper to the Divine Institutions. It is the deep yearning of the Spirit after light, and sympathy and liberty.

S. P. B.

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTON, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1855.

DIGNITY OF VOCATION.

No impression prevailing in society is more false or fatal to the manhood of a people, than that which gauges a man's worth or respectability, by the field of labor or profession he occupies, so long as that labor or profession is useful and honest. And we hold every useful vocation to be honest, denying, emphatically, that dishonesty is ever useful. The nobility of man—not depending in this country, thank God! upon hereditary honor, title or wealth—should flow not from the nature of his honest toil, but from the spirit he carries to that toil; the spirit by which, with or against the smiles of temporal fortune, he shapes his career among his intercourse with his fellow-men. He is more the true man, who turns chimney-sweeping to an honest, independent account, than he who, scorning the rough toils of the humble and needy, is willing to live an idler—however proudly caparisoned—upon the industry, sweat and blood of his fellow-men. The gospel of humanity teaches that nobility of character is hereditary only to nobility of action and thought, and that to be useful, honest, great and good, is to be great and good and beautiful in the sight of heaven. He is a braver man who persists in doing the humblest useful work well, in spite of human ridicule and contempt, than he who perils his life in bloody conflict, spurred by the vanity and ambition-flattering voice of the world.

Now and then we hear of the "most respectable" classes, and find that this respectability is made to rest upon peculiarities of position, upon external distinctions, as though a man's handwork were the necessary measure of his heart and soul, of that interior spiritual being which may

"Flame on the forehead of the dawn."

When its shell of a body and all its earthly externals are perished. What could be more false in public sentiment, or more debasing and dishonoring to true manhood, than the weighing of a man's nobility in the scale of the manual or other labor to which he may chance to be called, or by the accident of his place or caste of birth? Was the haughtiest of the line of Cæsars truly nobler than he who was "born in a manger," and "had not where to lay his head," or did the humblest avocations detract from the moral and spiritual splendor of those poor "disciples" whose glory is transendent while the names of contemporary kings are forgotten? And in a republic, where theories of "divine rights" and nobility of blood and caste, are professedly discarded, how shameful this distinguishing men for other than moral and mental worth! Yet this false distinction exists, and increases in our midst. We see it in a thousand displays of pseudo-aristocracy of up-start classes who, glorying in the possession of superior wealth, won, perhaps, by the hardened industry and prudence of a former generation, or by successful speculation, look down with vulgar scorn upon men who far surpass them in all the attributes of humanity.

That man is base who fails to remember with pride a noble-minded or noble-seeling ancestry; but base is the man who seeks to hide his own littleness or deformity under the mantle of reputable forefathers. The proudest coat-of-arms ever graven on a man's shield, or fitted to his shoulders, is the home-spun coat won by brave, honest toil. If we subtract for a moment from the world's history, the record of sturdy, humble labor, we strip the earth of its fairest pomp. Continents are reefs of cities and tilled fields; and ocean is shorn of its keels and white wings. The potent nobilities have done little more than to rust and corrupt the fruits of heroic "common" toil.

Henry Clay, republican in all his instincts, paid the working-man a just and noble compliment when he said to a mechanic, as he shook his hand, and pointed to the city's palaces and spires, "Behold, on every side, the monuments to your glory!" What matters it whether one carries the hod or the plumb-line—mixes the mortar or handles the trowel, so long as each will fill his place, and each is essential to the progressing triumphs of human attainment?

"They labor well who labor long and late;
Some toil as well who only watch and wait."

We would not have a man voluntarily descend to inferior conditions of toil, if he has the chance and capacity for the superior; but we would have every man feel that, when necessary or usefulness commands, there is no honest labor dishonorable. The Lord Chancellor on his wool-sack does not more conserve, according to his advantages, the welfare of mankind, than the mason who hews the stone in the quarry, or the shepherd who tends his flocks on the hill-side. Be it ever remembered that, while patent nobilities have been tarnished by the meanest vices and the most odious crimes, the revolutionaries of nations and the savors of races have sprung oftener from the ranks of the humble and obscure.

"Think not rage that clothe the bosom
Bear the noble soul within;
So the God may never blossom
Underneath a toiler's skin."

This is no idle matter. The world has been cursed in all ages by arbitrary castes and miserably false social distinctions, based on a "scale" of dignities of vocation. Should not every American, will not every true man, raise his (or her) voice and example against the furtherance in this land, as yet comparatively free from caste, of a sentiment calculated to raise as wide distinctions in our country, and as formidable barriers between classes, simply on the score of their differing toils and professions, as ever cursed feudalism in trampled Europe? Let him who boasts the superior respectability of his calling in the field of honest labor, be answered by contempt and scorn, for Burns has the truth of it:

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd, for a' that."

To the working-man—and he who toils not usefully is a dross among men and an abomination in the sight of God—we would say but one thing—Heed not the false sentiment that would deny you dignity of respectability because your labor soils your hands and swarthy brows. Better, by far, have soiled hands and swarthy brow, than the corrupt heart and the vicious brain of the two extremes of society who prey on your labor—the vagabonds of the gutter, shameless in their crime and mendicity, and the vaunted aristocracy, whose wealth hides their corruption from public sight. Aim high in honest purpose, holding a true soul as better than gold, and the approval of conscience as sweeter than the world's flattery, and you shall triumph, even in the humblest vocation. Your daily labor shall not be the guage of your manhood, for you have, over and above that, for self-communion and for society, a heart and brain which are not slaves to the work of your hands.

(Note.—The boat is about starting from Louisville to St. Louis, and I have no time to write more. I shall probably start from St. Louis home about the 15th inst.) CHARLES PARTRIDGE.

LETTER FROM MR. PARTRIDGE.

SPIRIT-MANIFESTATIONS IN ATHENS CO., O.

Number One.

Jonathan Koons lived with his parents in Bedford county, Pa., until April 1835, when he left, and finally married and settled in Athens county, Ohio, in 1837. His father was a member of the Presbyterian Church, and his mother of the Lutheran Church. Jonathan once joined the Episcopal Church, but never felt fully satisfied that the Bible was authentic and true. He found so many things in it that he could not reconcile with reason, that he lost all faith, neglected the church, and finally settled down in cold Atheism, and believed that death was the end of man.

Still he yearned for immortality, and tried to base a national faith in an unbroken continuity of life, upon the deepest desires of his soul; but when he considered that his first and greatest desire was to live here, and the evidences all around him proved that he could not, the foundation upon which he was endeavoring to build a rational hope was destroyed.

He continued to hear and read arguments for immortality, but nothing met his case. Finally he saw something in the N. Y. Tribune, respecting Spirit-rappings in Rochester, and then a report of a committee in Rochester, favoring the idea that the rappings were produced by Spirits. He subsequently read Charles Partridge's several statements in the same paper, of what he and others had witnessed in Rochester and in New York. He thought of going to Rochester to witness the phenomena; but being poor he deferred it. He soon learned that the thing was spreading, and hoped that if it was true, it would come within his reach. Finally a Mr. Joseph Herald, who lived in Athens county, was traveling in Indiana, and saw a rapping medium there. He asked the Spirit, in her presence, whether there was a medium in his county. The Spirit replied, "Yes; Mary Jane Paston, of Dover, Athens county, Ohio, is a rapping medium." When the young man returned, he called on the Paston family, and related what he had witnessed, and requested them to sit round the table with him. They did so, and to their astonishment raps were heard. None of the Paston family had seen or believed anything in Spiritualism. Mr. Paston was an infidel, as professing Christians would have called him, and Mrs. Paston was a member of the Methodist Church. They continued to hold circles. The wonder spread throughout the country, and attracted a great many visitors. Mr. Paston was slow to believe in the spiritual origin of the phenomena; for that interfered with his belief in annihilation. He was poor, and could not afford to spend his time, nor have his family spend theirs to wait upon company; and he became dissatisfied and provoked, and determined to break it up. He commanded his daughter, under some threat or penalty, to stop the raps, and not sit again for anybody; and people were turned away without giving them an opportunity to see anything.

The excitement subsided; people ceased coming; but the fact still maintained a hold on Mr. Paston's mind, who silently meditated upon them and upon his own conduct in the matter; and after some weeks or months he concluded to call on Jonathan Koons, whom he knew as a brother atheist, and relate the facts to him. He did so, and invited Koons to call at his house at a certain time, and they would privately investigate the matter. He was really afraid the phenomena would prove to be produced by Spirits, and thus destroy his faith in death as the end of man. Mr. Koons called at the appointed time, and had communications with the invisibles; and among other things, he asked if there was a medium in his immediate neighborhood or in his family. "Yes," was the reply. "Will you tell who it is?" "Thou art the man," said they, and appointed a certain day and hour, several days subsequent, when they would develop him as a medium. Mr. K. sat several days before the day appointed, but felt no influence; when the time came, however, his hand was seized by some strange influence, and used to write three or four sheets of paper over, in a very good hand-writing, in as many minutes. It had the appearance of a language, but he could not read it. They continued to write in this way some two weeks, and he rather neglected sitting, and expressed the opinion to his wife one day that the movements of his arm were not produced by Spirits, but some unconscious mental action of his own. His wife had observed its influence on him, and did not believe the intelligence and force originated in him or any other person present; and while they were discussing the matter, his hand was moved to write a communication to them in English, the character of which entirely disproved his theory.

His children, seven in number, then began to be developed, one for rapping, another for tipping, another for writing, another for speaking, another for seeing, and so on. The Spirits communicated through these several modes in the English language; but every Spirit seemed to have an opinion of his or her own, and no two seemed to agree. He concluded that all this was no better than the writing he could not read, for he knew not the intelligence or force originated in him or any other person present; and while they were discussing the matter, his hand was moved to write a communication to them in English, the character of which entirely disproved his theory.

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NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

Session of June 13th.

Original Communications.

THE NEW ERA.

MESSRS. PARTRIDGE AND BRITTON:

Gentlemen—The following lines purport to be from a young lady, deceased some ten months since. They were spelled out quite unexpectedly by the alphabet, at a private circle:

Men with countless tongues in gladness
Soon shall hear the new-born day,
Exulting over earth's sadness,
Whilst love gilds their happy way.

Then shall error die, and fearing
God's bright truth and holy light,

Fly beyond the pale of hearing—
Seek the darkest shades of night.

Man shall then, in joy and love,
Take his brother by the hand,

Help him onward, upward ever,

To God's glorious Spirit-land,

Love then ruling o'er men's hearts,

Kindling in them purest joy,

In each act a biles imparts—
Heavenly peace without alloy!

PHILADELPHIA, June 9.

hopeless, and soul-harrowing misery than may be found among the entire slave population of the United States.

I am not aware that any constitution of society now exists, in which an equality of political and social rights is enjoyed. Without the right to both, the security of either is impracticable. Where a comparatively large amount of political freedom prevails, the evils of social inequality are aggravated by mortified pride and the intolerable shame of a conscious degradation, which no healing balm can soothe.

The severest calamity which the slave is compelled to endure, is the terrible rupture of the ties of marriage and of consanguinity—the separation of husband from wife, and of parent from child. These, however, are less frequent than some misinterpretations might induce us to believe, and usually avoided with extreme solicitude by the master. Cases of total disregard to the family attachments of the slave, even amongst the most hardened dealers, are by no means common; and the impression sought to be given, and by many honestly entertained, that the universal practice of the slave-holders is to barter them with no more regard to their feelings than might be shown for the beasts that perish, is a cruel andounded interpretation.

If the ground which I have assumed be tenable, that the social inequality in the free States occasions a greater amount of human suffering than is inflicted upon the slave, should it not lead us to the suspicion that reform is needed at home, and that the first object of our solicitude, the first claim upon our kind offices, may be found among the wretched, the destitute, the broken-hearted, yet moderate envoys that may be found even now at our own doors? Yet a comparison in this case need not be instituted to admonish us of our first duty. "The poor are with us," and need our kind sympathy. Yet the entire race suffer, grievously suffer, under the prevailing evil of social inequality, which indeed comes home to many of us, in the direct shape of physical need—but the whole heart of humanity is seared, its best affections dried up, or changed to gall, by the jealousies, heart-burnings, revengeful and unyielding hate, which rankles in the bosom of the millions who are oppressed, slighted, scorned, and insulted, *because they are poor*!

May I not earnestly implore those true-hearted men and women whose warmest sympathies are enlisted in behalf of the slave, to make an effort to relieve and become more familiar with the suffering and the destitute who are ever near them, and whose only dependence for relief is upon their benevolence? No, I may not implore this old, even to the most destitute and mortiferous sufferers. It would be deemed an officious assumption. How is it, then, with the slave-holder? The great body of slave-holders throughout the states and territories where this institution prevails, treat their negroes kindly. They are well fed and comfortably clad. They have their holidays and Sabbaths, and frequently dwellings, and gardens, and domestic animals of their own. When past their prime, disabled by disease or age, they are not turned out to die, nor sold like a village pauper, to the lowest bidder, but are tenderly and comfortably cared for while life endures.

Yet an extraordinary excitement begins. missionaries are sent forth, slavery is denounced as an outrage against humanity; its evils, great as they are, are excessively exaggerated, and represented as one uninterrupted series of savage barbarity, which the Christian world and all good men are invoked to the righteous labor of extirpating.

With the common attributes of humanity, could our fellow-citizens of the South do otherwise than resent and resist such threatened interference with their domestic institutions?—an interference which, however well intended, if successful, must expose them to a servile war and all its horrible excesses—an inevitable, sanguinary, and fearful strife, to be quelled by no other means but the extirpation of the race it was vainly proposed to repress.

Men perform good deeds from the prompting of their own hearts—they may be persuaded by the voice of kindness and wisdom; but by threats, misrepresentation and abuse, never.

We all need social reform; and the best means of promoting this object is to be found in mutual forbearance, universal charity, and the diligent cultivation of the benevolent affections.

When the heart is right, the intellect seldom errs.

W. K. MINOR.

With an ardent desire for the spread of truth, I am your friend,

MAGNETISM AS RELATED TO VITALITY.

BY JAMES LEWIS.

PRINCIPLES.—1st. All chemical combinations or decompositions are attended with an evolution of electricity, either positive or negative.

2d. Different elements connected by peculiar mediators develop electricity, which electricity is capable of developing in a sensible form, heat, light, and magnetic forces. Electricity developed in this form, has power to resolve chemical combinations, and induces other chemical changes; also power, in favorable circumstances, of inducing *extra currents* of similar character.

3d. Electricity in continuous currents radiating from a center, produces magnetic spheres, differing from polar magnetism in its sensible properties.

4th. Magnetism is capable of inducing electricity, which electricity is possessed of the same sensible properties as when developed in any other manner.

5th. In all organized bodies, influenced by vitality, are the following:

1st. A constant *chemical* action of combinations and decompositions—*digestion*; 2d. An assemblage of organs, having surfaces of different characters, which surfaces have interposed mediators capable of facilitating the development of electricity. The nerves may be properly considered the conductors of vital electricity, from the following reasons. 1st. The nervous mass may be excited to perfect action by currents of electricity, without the intervention of the will; 2d. The sensation and power of motion of a part may be destroyed by a division of the nerves distributed to such part. 3d. Electricity caused to act on the eye, produces a sensation of light; on the auditory nerves a sensation of sound; on the nervous membrane of the mouth or nose, a peculiar taste or smell is experienced.

6th. From the above premises it is evident that the matter composing the bodies of organized beings is continually evolving electricity, and that this evolution is a necessary accompaniment of vitality, and it is also evident that the peculiar arrangement of matter in such bodies known as the nervous system, serves to accumulate, and apply for the purposes of vitality, the electricity necessarily generated therein, then it is easy also from the above premises to explain from known laws the method in which, in certain persons, a peculiar state of the nervous system known as magnetic sleep may be induced.

Assuming the ground that the vitality of organized beings is the result of the peculiar action of electricity on matter organized for this purpose, and that the nerves are the proper conductors of the vital electricity, I venture to offer the following solution of the problem involved in the phenomena known as animal magnetism.

The brain is composed in great part of nervous fibers, which, in a manner little understood, have control of all the functions relative to external life (sensation and motion). In this mass of nervous fibers, the elementary nerves may be seen arranged in various ways, having various flexures, radiations, and communications with each other. These fibrous conductors of the vital electricity must produce at their various points of flexure or radiation, either spheres or poles of magnetism more or less marked; and judging from the radiations that have been demonstrated to exist near the center of the brain, the assertions of magnetic subjects, that *at this point is the most marked development of magnetism*, is correct.

Having adduced what seems to me satisfactory evidence that magnetic poles or spheres pertain to the nervous system, it becomes apparent that these vital phenomena called *magnetic*, are truly so.

A particular portion of the brain gives origin to nerves of sensation; another has relation to nerves of motion. The nerves of sensation convey currents of vital electricity to that portion of the brain which takes cognizance of sensation. The nerves of motion convey currents from those parts of the brain which control voluntary or other motion under the influence of the will, etc.

The various flexures, ganglions, unions and bifurcations of the nerves in the various parts of the system, present favorable conditions for the development of magnetic powers, and particularly the expansion of the nerves on the sensitive extremities, as the ends of the fingers. The hand, from this reason, is an efficient agent in inducing sympathetic magnetic efforts, and the manner appears simple. Thus the hands of two persons are placed in contact, with the intention of bringing about the magnetic sleep in one. His whose constitution is most active, and whose will most powerful, will have the ascendancy. The polarity in the ends of his fingers being more vigorous than in the other, by a process similar to that known in terrestrial or mineral magnetism, may induce a change of polarity in the subject. This change of polarity once induced, the currents circulating in the nerves which organized this polarity originally, become changed in a manner similar to that stated in principle 4th. In a similar manner progressively, the polarity of the nerves of relation may all be changed. The various parts of the brain being empowered to act vicariously for each other, and their nerves not being capable of acting vicariously, motion and sensation under the influence of the will, etc.

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